

September 20, 2011

Mr. Steve McCraw
Director
Texas Department of Public Safety
5805 N. Lamar Blvd
Austin, Texas 78773

Dear Mr. McGraw:

I write regarding the Department of Public Safety's (DPS) implementation of Senate Bill 14 (82nd Legislature), also known as the "voter ID" bill. I have a number of outstanding questions that I hope can be addressed prior to DPS's draft rules being released for public comment:

- How many DPS office locations will be issuing the election identification certificate (EIC), the free identification option that satisfies the requirements of Section 63.001(b), Election Code? Where are these offices located?
- Will persons seeking to apply for an EIC have to wait in the same line as others seeking to apply for a driver's license? Or will there be a separate processing line for those only seeking an EIC?
- What is the current average wait time, by day of the week, for persons seeking to apply for a driver's license at each DPS office location that will be issuing EICs?
- What identification will be required in order to obtain an EIC?
- How long do you anticipate the turnaround will be from the day a person applies for an EIC to the date they receive the actual EIC? Will DPS be offering a temporary EIC at DPS office locations that will comply with the requirements of Section 63.001(b) of the Election Code so that any delays in processing or mailing out the official EIC will not result in a person's inability to vote?
- Recent press reports indicate that a top official in the Wisconsin Department of Transportation instructed staff at Division of Motor Vehicles service centers *not* to tell members of the public that they can obtain voter identification cards free of charge unless they know to ask for it. Will DPS be taking a similar approach? In other words, will DPS staff be precluded from telling members of the public that they can obtain an EIC free-of-charge unless directly asked?

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- Does DPS plan on organizing any satellite locations, temporary or otherwise, in order to provide Texans with opportunities to apply for an EIC outside of the normal DPS office locations? I would note this would be especially relevant for Texans with disabilities, the elderly, and those too sick or without means to travel to a DPS office location.

As DPS develops draft rules for SB 14's implementation, I ask that you take into consideration the concerns expressed above. While it is my desire to have a free, fair, and secure election system, it must also be accessible to all eligible voters. I look forward to your written response to my questions.

Sincerely,

Rodney Ellis

CC: The Honorable Hope Andrade